

One of the focuses I had coming in to the position of Association Manager was knowing I would also be tasked with running the State Open tournament. Thus far, the task of acting as Tournament Director for the Oregon State USBC Open Tournament has been a mixed bag of challenge and inspiration.

I knew that the preparation for such a large event would entail some time-management challenges, but what has been more of a challenge is coordinating the efforts to satisfy the choice of squad dates and times. Since entries began coming in as early as last August, I expected there would be lineup changes as well as date and time changes. Our system makes such changes relatively simple and since I have experience trying to organize teams for tournaments such as this, I understand life happens and changes are inevitable. So, making such changes hasn't really been a big deal at all.

What has been more challenging is accommodating squad times. Between phone calls, texts, e-mails, Facebook messages, I have received so many requests for specific squad times I had to work out a secondary spreadsheet from our main tournament software to keep everybody in their proper place in line to fairly honor requested squad times with preferences being given to paid entries.

I'm not sure how those that went before me handled such requests, but it's been more of a challenge than I had expected, possibly because there's so many different platforms to monitor incoming requests in today's world. However, there's light at the end of the tunnel. Next year, our association is looking to implement an online system similar to that used by the national Open tournament for sign-ups. In that way, you will be able to see availability of squad dates and times online without having to make a phone call, text, e-mail, or Facebook message. I am very much looking forward to implementing that system!

With all that said, the nuts and bolts of the behind-the-scenes stuff isn't the part that really has caught my attention and served as inspiration to serve as the tournament director for this event. What has caught my attention are the number of teams that faithfully enter year after year. I'm finding that some of these teams are multi-generational as well.

In my time as a participant of this tournament, I have known of some of these teams that enter faithfully – the U of O Alumni teams, the Milwaukie Bowl group, and one of my favorite teams to compete against, Norman's Pig Farm. There's so much history with these groups, and I have been lucky enough to have been able to sit down and have a conversation with some of these participants that I could write blogs and blogs about some of the truly fascinating stories I've heard from these groups.

As of this writing, two weekends are virtually full for both morning and afternoon squads – April 18-19 and May 23-24. As the May 23-24 weekend is Memorial Day weekend and the last weekend of the tournament, there is an extra third Team squad at 5:30 pm on the 23rd that has spots available. There are very few 2 pm Team or 1 pm Doubles/Singles squads left except for the first two weekends in April and the second weekend in May, but most mornings are open except for the two weekends mentioned above. So, if you have any questions regarding availability of squad dates and times, please call or text me (503) 995-4705, send me an e-mail (manager@osusbc.com works best) or send me a Facebook message. I will do my best to get back to you as soon as possible.

Looking forward to seeing you at the tournament!

Gary Yamasaki
OSUSBC Association Manager